

Determination of Effect on Essential Fish Habitat from the Phase V Early Restoration, Florida Coastal Access Project

1.0 EFH Overview

The 1996 Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires cooperation among the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), anglers, and federal and state agencies to protect, conserve, and enhance essential fish habitat (EFH). EFH is defined as those waters and substrates necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity. The designation and conservation of EFH seeks to minimize adverse effects on those habitats caused by fishing and non-fishing activities.

2.0 Florida Coastal Access Project Description

The proposed Florida Coastal Access Project involves the acquisition and/or enhancement of four coastal project locations in the Florida Panhandle. The four proposed locations include Innerarity Point in Escambia County, a parcel in the City of Destin, a parcel in the City of Lynn Haven, and Island View Park in Franklin County. A public park would be built at each location including various park amenities. Each location, together with the specific actions proposed for that site, is described as one "Component," as follows:

- **Innerarity Point Park Component.** The proposed Innerarity Point Park component involves the acquisition of a 3.38-acre parcel in Escambia County, Florida and the building of a public park on the property.
- **Leonard Destin Park Component.** The proposed Leonard Destin Park component involves the acquisition of a 3.42-acre parcel in the City of Destin, Florida (Okaloosa County) and the building of a public park on the property.
- **Lynn Haven Preserve and Park Component.** The proposed Lynn Haven Preserve and Park component involves the acquisition of a 90.7-acre unimproved tract in the City of Lynn Haven, Florida (Bay County) and the building a public park on the property.
- **Island View Park Component.** The proposed Island View Park component involves the building of a public park on a 7.13-acre parcel owned by Franklin County.

3.0 Federally Managed Fisheries and EFH

Information on designated EFH in the Gulf of Mexico was obtained in November, 2015 from the NMFS EFH web site at <http://www.habitat.noaa.gov/protection/efh/newInv/index.html>. EFH habitats identified in the Gulf of Mexico at the four project sites include estuarine emergent wetlands, seagrass beds, algal flats, mud, sand, shell, and rock substrates, and the estuarine water column.

Table 1 provides a summary of the species identified as having designated EFH for one or more life stages within the area of potential affect for the proposed project. Additionally, below is a brief description of the area covered under the Fishery Management Plans (FMP) for the species with designated EFH in the area of potential affect.

Table 1: Federally managed highly migratory species (HMS) with designated essential fish habitat (EFH) in the proposed project area.

EFH Category	Species
Coastal Migratory Pelagics of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic	Cobia
	King Mackerel
	Spanish Mackerel
Gulf of Mexico Red Drum	Red Drum
Gulf of Mexico Shrimp	Brown Shrimp
	Pink Shrimp
	Rock Shrimp
	Royal Red Shrimp
	Seabob Shrimp
	White Shrimp
Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico	Almaco Jack
	Banded Rudderfish
	Black Grouper
	Blackfin Snapper
	Blueline Tilefish
	Cubera Snapper
	Gag
	Goldface Tilefish
	Gray (Mangrove) Snapper
	Gray Triggerfish
	Greater Amberjack
	Hogfish
	Lane Snapper
	Lesser Amberjack
	Mutton Snapper
	Nassau Grouper
	Queen Snapper
	Red Grouper
	Red Snapper
	Scamp
	Silk Snapper
	Snowy Grouper
	Speckled Hind
	Tilefish
	Vermilion Snapper
	Warsaw Grouper
Wenchman	
Yellowedge Grouper	
Yellowfin Grouper	
Yellowmouth Grouper	
Stone Crab	Stone Crab

Coastal Migratory Pelagics FMP

EFH for coastal migratory pelagic resources consists of Gulf of Mexico waters and substrates extending from the U.S./Mexico border to the boundary between the areas covered by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council from estuarine waters out to depths of 100 fathoms.

Red Drum FMP

EFH for red drum consists of all Gulf of Mexico estuaries; waters and substrates extending from Vermilion Bay, Louisiana to the eastern edge of Mobile Bay, Alabama out to depths of 25 fathoms; waters and substrates extending from Crystal River, Florida to Naples, Florida between depths of 5 and 10 fathoms; waters and substrates extending from Cape Sable, Florida to the boundary between the areas covered by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council between depths of 5 and 10 fathoms.

Shrimp FMP

EFH for shrimp consists of Gulf of Mexico waters and substrates extending from the U.S./Mexico border to Fort Walton Beach, Florida from estuarine waters out to depths of 100 fathoms; waters and substrates extending from Grand Isle, Louisiana to Pensacola Bay, Florida between depths of 100 and 325 fathoms; waters and substrates extending from Pensacola Bay, Florida to the boundary between the areas covered by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council out to depths of 35 fathoms, with the exception of waters extending from Crystal River, Florida to Naples, Florida between depths of 10 and 25 fathoms and in Florida Bay between depths of 5 and 10 fathoms.

Reef Fish FMP

EFH for reef fish consists of Gulf of Mexico waters and substrates extending from the U.S./Mexico border to the boundary between the areas covered by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council from estuarine waters out to depths of 100 fathoms.

Stone Crab FMP

EFH for stone crab consists of Gulf of Mexico waters and substrates extending from the U.S./Mexico border to Sanibel, Florida from estuarine waters out to depths of 10 fathoms; waters and substrates extending from Sanibel, Florida to the boundary between the areas covered by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council from estuarine waters out to depths of 15 fathoms.

EFH assessments for three of the four components are provided below in Section 4.0. After initiating consultations with NMFS, it was determined that an EFH assessment for the Lynn Haven Preserve and

Park was not necessary because this site does not contain submerged aquatic vegetation and proposed activities would not affect EFH.

4.0 Determination of Effect on essential fish habitat for Three Project Components

4.1 Florida Coastal Access Project: Innerarity Point Park Component

The proposed Innerarity Point Park component is located in Escambia County (see Figure 1 for proposed parcel location) and is adjacent to the heavily-used Galvez Landing boat ramp (which was improved as part of Phase I Early Restoration (see Section 4.7 of the Phase I Early Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment (Phase I ERP/EA))). The 3.38-acre site for the proposed Innerarity Point Park includes 265 linear feet of frontage along the Old River, a heavily used waterway for recreational vessel traffic, which flows between Innerarity Point and Perdido Key out to Perdido Bay (see Figure 2, Figure 3, and Figure 4). An unoccupied single family house (constructed in 2004) and gravel driveway occupies the northern portion of the property. A second residential structure previously existed at the southern portion of the property overlooking the Old River waterway. Although the second residential structure no longer exists, the concrete foundation remains. The remainder of the property is unimproved and consists of lawn area with mature live oaks (see Figure 2), and coastal vegetation along the shoreline (see Figure 2 and Figure 3 for photographs of shoreline).



Figure 1: Proposed Innerarity Point Park Plot; 3.38 acre site in Escambia County, Florida on Perdido Bay.



Figure 2: Existing view towards the waterway at the proposed Innerarity Point Park (source: TPL 2015).



Figure 3: Photo of the proposed Innerarity Point Park shoreline looking east towards Galvez Landing (source: TPL 2015).

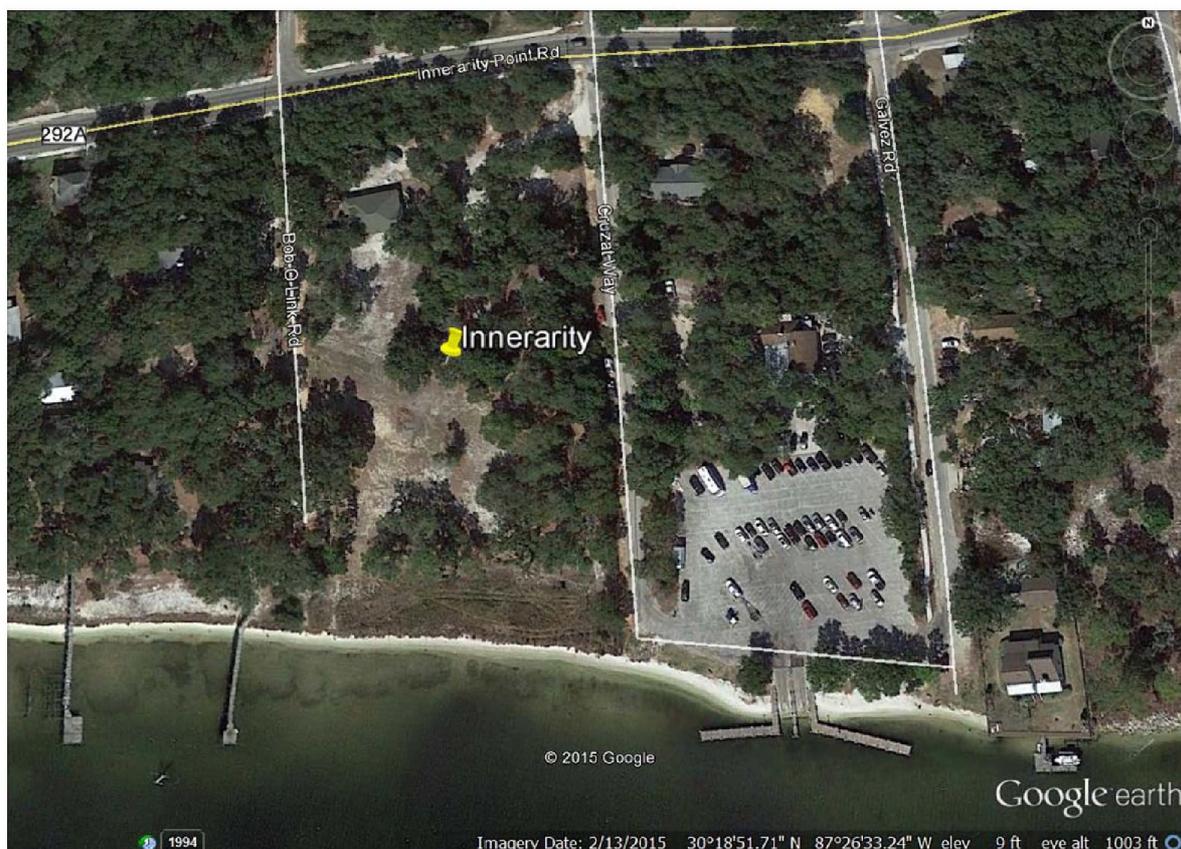


Figure 4: Aerial View of the Proposed Innerarity Point Park Site and Aquatic Habitat (Google Imagery, 2015).

Specific elements of the proposed Innerarity Point Park conceptual site plan (Figure 5) include the following:

1. **New Dock with Kayak Launch.** The proposed project includes a pier and boardwalk (442 feet long by 5 feet wide, totaling approximately 2,210 square feet), and dock platforms (790 square feet) for kayak access. The entire dock including the platforms for kayaks would encompass 3,000 square feet (2,210 + 790). Pier construction would include placement of new piles (two approximately 8" pilings for every 10 linear feet of dock) using the least invasive techniques given substrate and construction cost considerations (e.g., jetting, pushing, or driving the piles). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers/National Marine Fisheries Service (USACE/NMFS) Construction Guidelines in Florida for Minor Piling-Support Structures Constructed in or over Submerged Aquatic Vegetation, Marsh or Mangrove Habitat (herein referred to as "USACE and NMFS dock construction guidelines") will be considered during dock design and construction as appropriate. Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FLDEP) staff visually inspected the site in mid-November, 2015 and determined that there is a break in the SAV along the shoreline. The access walkway of this pier would extend from the shore, near the center of the parcel where there is an absence of SAV along the shoreline, and be oriented in a north-to-south

direction. A perpendicular section of pier is proposed at the end of the main branch, and would be oriented approximately east to west and would be constructed in an area devoid of SAV. If necessary, the design of the dock would incorporate the use of composite grated materials that would allow light through to avoid shading impacts to surrounding SAV, and as noted above, would refer to the USACE and NMFS dock construction guidelines.

2. **Expanded Beach Area.** The beach area would be expanded by removing a portion (approximately 3,500 square feet) of the vegetation landward of the shoreline, which is a mixture of native and invasive vegetation including *Spartina* and morning glory, some of which is currently being regularly mowed. All proposed beach expansion efforts would take place on land above the mean high water line and would avoid impacts to *Spartina* and other native vegetation wherever possible. During final design and construction, the beach expansion may be modified to minimize any impacts.
3. **Beach Access for Kayaks.** The boardwalk would include access directly to the beach on the western portion of the property. A small area of vegetation (likely a combination of some native and some invasive species) may need to be removed to provide this access.
4. **Shoreline Restoration.** Currently a mixture of native and invasive vegetative species exists along the shoreline. An area (approximately 2,500 square feet) on the landward side of the beach would undergo invasive species removal and subsequent planting with native shoreline vegetation. The specific invasive plants that will be removed, native plants selected for planting and other details on this restoration effort will be determined during final design and construction. Impacts to native plants will be avoided wherever possible. The intent of the action will be to increase the amount of native species present in these areas.
5. **Accessible Boardwalk with Steps and Ramps.** The wood pier and boardwalk would have Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible wood boardwalk connections that are five feet wide, 220 feet long with handrails.
6. **Overlook Deck with Central Bench Seating.** A wood overlook deck would be constructed approximately 1,500 square feet in size and would include interior bench seating. This structure would be constructed at the southern portion of the property landward of the beach.
7. **Treehouse Overlook.** A two-story wildlife viewing platform approximately 400 square feet would be constructed at the southwest corner of the property.
8. **Arbor Swings.** Two, 20-square foot wooden arbors with bench swings would be placed on a small wood platform adjacent to the overlook deck.
9. **Six Small Open-Air Picnic Pavilions.** Six small (200 square feet each) open air wooden picnic pavilions with grills and picnic tables would be constructed throughout the property. These structures would consist of basic wood frames built on concrete slabs and would provide users shade.
10. **Open lawn area.** An open lawn area (grass) would be maintained on the property as a picnic space. This area (approximately 0.2-acre) would require periodic, seasonally-dependent irrigation. Because the site is small and already connected to public water, the open lawn area would likely be maintained by installing a timed sprinkler system. Minimal additional maintenance would be done for this area, which is already an open area on the current parcel.

11. **Playground for ages 5-12.** The playground would be installed which would be approximately 300 square feet. Generally, structural features would be comprised of natural (i.e., wood) materials and/or durable composite materials. An informational sign (content based on input from the County) would also be installed at the playground.
12. **Large Shade Seating Structure.** One large (900 square feet) shade seating structure with picnic tables would be placed between the two playgrounds. This would be constructed of simple wood frame on a concrete slab.
13. **Playground for ages 2-5.** The playground would be installed which would be approximately 300 square feet. Generally, structural features would be comprised of natural (i.e., wood) materials and/or durable composite materials. An informational sign (content based on input from the County) would also be constructed at the playground.
14. **Restrooms.** One ADA accessible restroom facility with flush toilets, sinks, and rinse showers (600 square feet) would be constructed and connected to municipal sewer and water.
15. **Large Picnic and Gathering Pavilion.** One large (900 square feet) open air picnic pavilion with grills and picnic tables would be constructed on the property. Like the other pavilions, it would be a simple wood frame construction over a concrete slab.
16. **Main Pedestrian Entry with Sign.** A sign with the park name would be installed at the main park entrance near the parking lot.
17. **Split-Rail Fence.** A 640-foot long split-rail cedar fence would be constructed at the park entrance near the parking lot.
18. **Pedestrian Access to Cruzat Way (Landing and Restaurant).** Pedestrian access to the adjacent Galvez Landing Boat ramp would be provided through an opening in a proposed 800-foot long, six-foot tall black vinyl coated chain link fence. This fence would replace and extend the currently existing fence to guide foot traffic onto boardwalks and minimize impact on beach vegetation.
19. **Stormwater Pond (as-needed) with Footbridge Crossing.** Stormwater ponds and landscape drainage areas would be implemented in the center of the parking area pending engineering designs and calculations of anticipated stormwater runoff. If a stormwater pond is constructed, a raised 32-foot long ADA accessible boardwalk would also be constructed at the pond crossing in the parking area.
20. **Pedestrian Access to Existing Sidewalk.** A short walkway would be constructed from the site parking lot to the public sidewalk at the north edge of the property.

Additional site elements not explicitly labeled in the conceptual master plan include:

- **Parking.** An ADA accessible parking lot would be constructed of pervious pavement for 50+ visitors encompassing approximately 2,500 square feet.
- **Concrete sidewalks.** ADA accessible concrete sidewalks would be constructed between picnic area and viewing area features in the central property areas (five feet wide and four inches deep, covering a total area of approximately 9,050 square feet).

- **General site furnishings.** Furnishings would be placed throughout the park including 12 trash receptacles, eight picnic benches along the outer sidewalk and deck overlook, and a total of 22 picnic tables.
- **Site lighting.** Lighting would include 10 pole lights at the parking area and three low voltage accent lights at the park entry signs. All lighting would be low-glare, wildlife friendly, and comply with the guidance provided in the current edition of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) Wildlife Lighting Criteria.
- **Off-site Road Improvement.** The public Bob O Link is a gravel road located adjacent to and directly west of the proposed project site. A small section of the road between Innerarity Point Road to the park entrance (approximately 90 feet long and approximately 30 feet wide), would be paved and maintained by Escambia County. A sign would be placed at the vehicular entrance to the park.
- **Signs.** In addition to the aforementioned signs, two additional signs would be placed at the park property corners visible from Innerarity Point road, with small directed lighting. All lighting would be low-glare, wildlife friendly, and comply with the guidance provided in the current edition of the FWC's Wildlife Lighting Criteria.
- **Landscaping.** General landscape development would include existing tree protection and fencing, hardwood tree maintenance, fine grading and bed preparation for all sodded and seeded areas, soil amendments (excluding naturalized areas), planting of large and small trees, shrubs, grasses, groundcovers, sod and mulching. To the extent possible, landscaping would prioritize conserving native plantings, and low-maintenance, drought-resistant plants to reduce long-term maintenance.
- **Additional site work.** Additional work would include removal of existing site structures including the house and concrete slabs. The house would be demolished, any salvageable materials would be re-used, and other materials would be disposed of in a landfill. Other site work would include modifying existing electric service, linking to the available municipal sewer system, fire hydrant assembly and accompanying water main work, site grading (as-needed), and erosion control efforts during construction activities.

Final engineering and design plans for the proposed site improvements would be completed following further environmental resource surveys and consultations with state and federal agencies. Proposed site improvements may be modified to avoid and minimize potential natural resource impacts. Installation of the proposed site improvements is estimated to take nine to 12 months to complete. Staging of equipment and materials would likely be located on the property where parking lots would be constructed (according to the conceptual plan), or on previously disturbed areas of the site. Construction equipment would include a combination of hand-held or power tools for carpentry work as well as heavier construction equipment such as bulldozers, barges, trucks, backhoes, tractor trailers, cranes, small excavators, fork lifts, asphalt machine, roller, or generators. As discussed in greater detail below, standard practice BMPs will be employed during construction to minimize and avoid potential adverse impacts to EFH during in-water work such as mooring and staging work barges in areas devoid of SAV overnight and on weekends/holidays. Construction activities would require the transport of

materials to the project site. The number of trips required to transfer materials would be based on the amount and type of materials needed for site improvements. These details would be determined as part of the final construction design and plan.



Figure 5: Proposed Innerarity Point Park Conceptual Plan. Left side of the conceptual plan shows the proposed dock.

4.1.1 Assessment of effects to EFH

The proposed Innerarity Point Park is within the EFH area for coastal migratory pelagics, red drum, reef fish, shrimp, and stone crab. There may be SAV at the Innerarity Point Park location. Based on the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's seagrass GIS data, there appear to be two patches of discontinuous SAV off the proposed site; the western and eastern patches are approximately 0.13 and 0.09 acre in size, respectively (FDEP 2015, see Figure 6). Updated submerged SAV surveys would occur prior to construction (ideally during June 1 through September 30) because SAV bed continuity, extent, and density are subject to change over time. Mud substrate and estuarine water column habitat also exists within the project area. No Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC) or EFH areas protected from fishing were identified within the project area.

Under the Proposed Action, in-water work constructing a dock and kayak launch would potentially impact SAV. The dock area is expected to be approximately 2,210 square feet and the proposed platforms and kayak launch would add approximately 790 square feet to the 2,210 square feet of the dock, totaling 3,000 square feet that the dock structure would cover. The USACE and NMFS dock construction guidelines would be followed where possible regarding dock construction; however, final placement and design would include the need for ADA compliance.

Impacts to SAV may result from piling installation in potential SAV colonized substrate and from the expected shadow footprint of the dock, as shading has been known to impact SAV. An analysis of SAV, likely via aerial imagery analysis and field surveys, would be conducted prior to finalization of engineering and design plans. The access walkway of the dock would be oriented approximately north to south and would be built out through an area previously identified as devoid of SAV to avoid SAV impacts. The perpendicular dock would be oriented approximately east to west and would be built out past the SAV. By constructing the dock beyond SAV, SAV impacts would be avoided. The height of the proposed dock will be decided upon during the design phase and will refer to the USACE and NMFS dock construction guidelines for the recommended elevation over SAV as well as ADA compliance considerations. The actual footprint of the dock would be the anticipated shadow footprint. It is anticipated the shadow from the proposed dock would not impact SAV; however, if it is determined shading impacts may occur, the design of the dock would incorporate the use of composite grated materials to allow increased light transmission to further minimize SAV impacts.

Placement of new piles for dock construction would use the least invasive techniques given substrate and construction cost considerations (e.g., jetting, pushing, or driving the piles). In-water dredging or digging associated with installation of the pilings for the docks is not anticipated, though substrate displacement and compaction from dock piling installation is expected. Impacts to SAV would stem from piling installation and the increase in turbidity that this would temporarily cause. It is expected less than 35 square feet of substrate would likely be disturbed in the marine environment during dock construction.

Upland construction activities including the construction of an offsite access road, picnic pavilions, restrooms, boardwalk and paved sidewalks, an overlook deck, as well as site improvements including

the natural playground, lawn, beach enhancements and shoreline restoration have the potential to temporarily impact EFH in the immediate waters adjacent to the site from erosion and runoff, increasing turbidity and suspended sediments. The Trustees have begun coordination with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Habitat Conservation Division to complete regulatory compliance with EFH consultation requirements. Any EFH conservation recommendations during consultation would be incorporated into final project design and implementation to avoid and minimize EFH impacts. The Trustees would work with the NMFS to ensure appropriate conservation recommendations would be used, which may include:

- Use of BMPs during construction to minimize and avoid potential adverse impacts to EFH during in-water work under this project. Construction BMPs could include, but are not limited to mooring and staging work barges overnight and on weekends/holidays in areas devoid of SAV and in areas where previous impacts have occurred.
- All construction activities would be completed during daylight hours.
- When possible, pilings would be installed using methods and materials that use the least disruptive techniques, given substrate conditions, such as pushing or jetting.
- Dock construction methods would be designed to maximize sunlight reaching SAV.
- Compensatory mitigation, contingency, and monitoring plans would be developed and provided to the USACE and NMFS for unavoidable impacts to EFH.

The proposed project component has the potential to cause disturbances to EFH in areas adjacent to the project location from increased suspended sediment and runoff, as well as dock construction. However, as noted above, EFH conservation recommendations received during consultation would be incorporated into final project design and implementation to avoid and minimize EFH impacts. Therefore, adverse impacts to EFH are expected to be short term and minor.

4.1.2 Impact Avoidance and Minimization Measures

- An analysis of SAV, likely via aerial imagery analysis and field surveys during the period June 1 through September 30, would be conducted prior to the start of construction. Results of the SAV survey will be provided to the NMFS Habitat Conservation Division for review.
- Compliance with the USACE dock construction guidelines (USACE and NMFS 2001; see attached) will be followed regarding dock construction to minimize SAV impacts. ADA compliance will also be considered during final dock placement and design.
- To avoid permanent impacts to the SAV, a variety of impact avoidance measures, in compliance with the USACE dock construction guidelines, would be taken. These include:
 - The dock access walkway would be adjusted to be constructed in between the two existing patches of SAV (Figure 6 and 7).
 - After completion of the SAV survey, the dock would be extended out past the deepest extent of the SAV (approximately greater than 70 feet from shore) to avoid constructing the perpendicular dock directly in the potential SAV beds and avoid the shading of the SAV.

- The dock would be designed to minimize the footprint and shadow. The dock would be built at or above minimum height requirements above the mean high water line in accordance with the USACE/NMFS Dock Construction Guidelines.
- Improvement activities would include following established BMPs for construction activities such as the implementation of an erosion control and stormwater management plan, the installation of sediment traps prior to commencement of construction activities, and ongoing construction monitoring to ensure compliance. Any in-water piling work would be performed behind silt curtains to isolate construction impacts and reduce any impacts to surrounding habitat.

4.1.3 Conclusion

The proposed work includes constructing a new dock and kayak launch. The main branch of the dock would be oriented approximately north to south and built out through an area devoid of SAV to avoid SAV impacts. The perpendicular dock would be oriented approximately east to west and would be constructed in area devoid of SAV to avoid impacts. However, if it is determined shading impacts may occur, the design of the dock would incorporate the use of composite grated materials that would allow light through to minimize impacts to surrounding SAV. The proposed construction may cause disturbances to EFH from increased suspended sediment and runoff. However, these disturbances are expected to be short-term and minor, and the risks and potential impacts will be minimized by following identified best management practices during implementation.

Overall, this project may cause minor localized negative impacts to estuarine areas that are considered EFH for various life stages of the species managed under FMPs.



Figure 6: SAV off of the Proposed Innerarity Point Park Parcel (FLDEP 2015).

Note: only part of the area within the circle is off of the proposed Innerarity Point Park site.



Figure 7: SAV off of the Innerarity parcel in 2012 (left) and 2015 (right). Source: Google Maps 2012, 2015.

4.2 Florida Coastal Access Project: Leonard Destin Park Component

The proposed Florida Coastal Access Project: Leonard Destin Park component lies within Okaloosa County (see Figure 8 for proposed parcel location). The property is approximately 3.42 acres and includes 280 linear feet of frontage on Choctawhatchee Bay, a heavily used waterway for recreational and commercial vessel traffic. There is an existing pier on the property, developed in 1994 (see Figure 10). A private commercial pontoon boat and Jet Ski rental business currently operates on the property. The commercial operation utilizes the existing dock as well as the western portion of the property for a gravel parking lot, boat storage, temporary storage units, picnic tables, and beach chairs. Patrons of the pontoon boat and Jet Ski rental operator use the property for parking, picnicking and lounging on the beach (see Figure 9 and Figure 10).

LEONARD DESTIN PARK

OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA

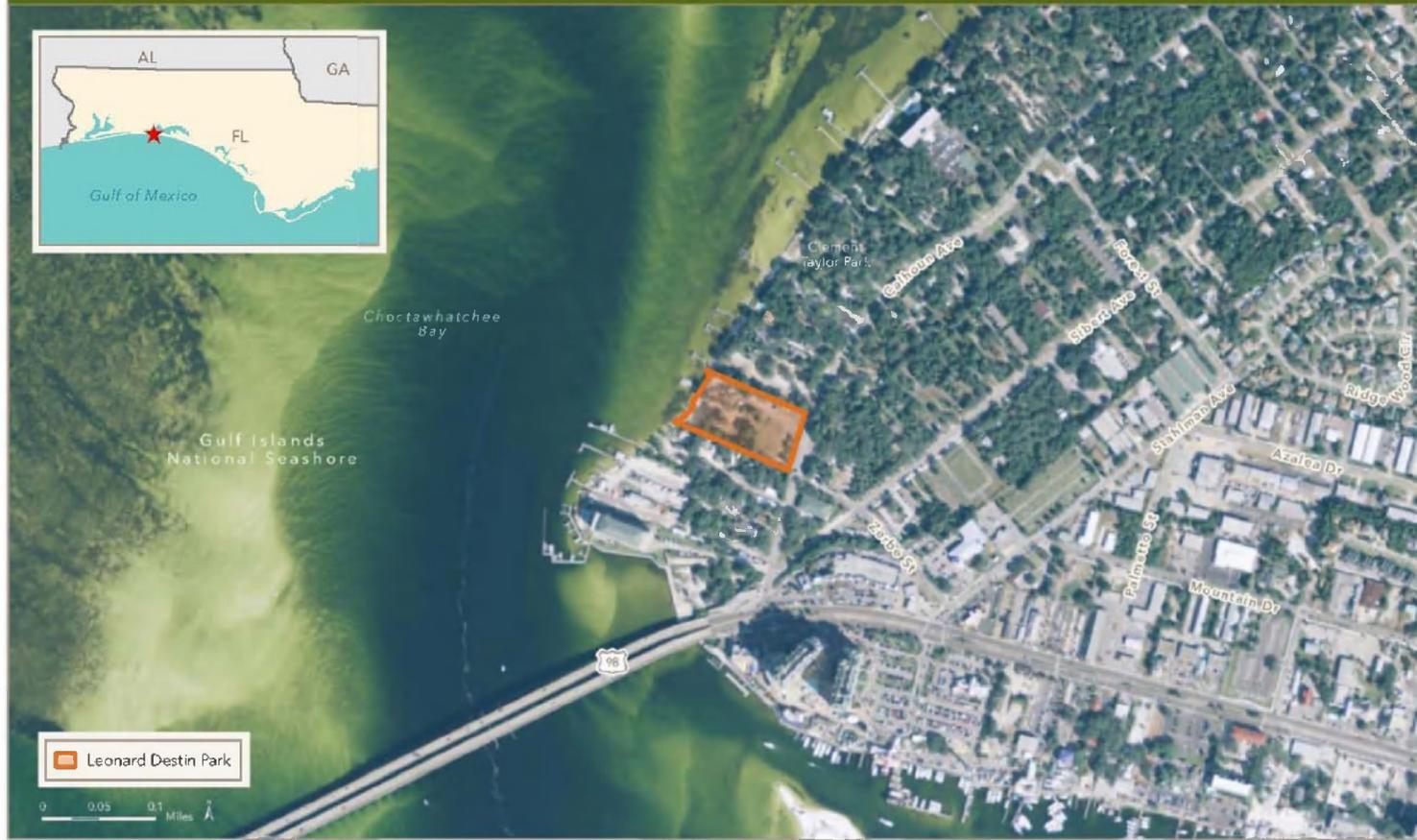


Figure 8: Proposed Leonard Destin Park Plot; 3.38 acre site in Okaloosa County, Florida on Choctawhatchee Bay.



Figure 9: Leonard Destin Park- existing view looking towards great blue heron nesting trees, existing dock, and waterway (source: TPL 2015).



Figure 10: Leonard Destin Park- existing beach area and dock looking west towards waterway (source: TPL 2015).

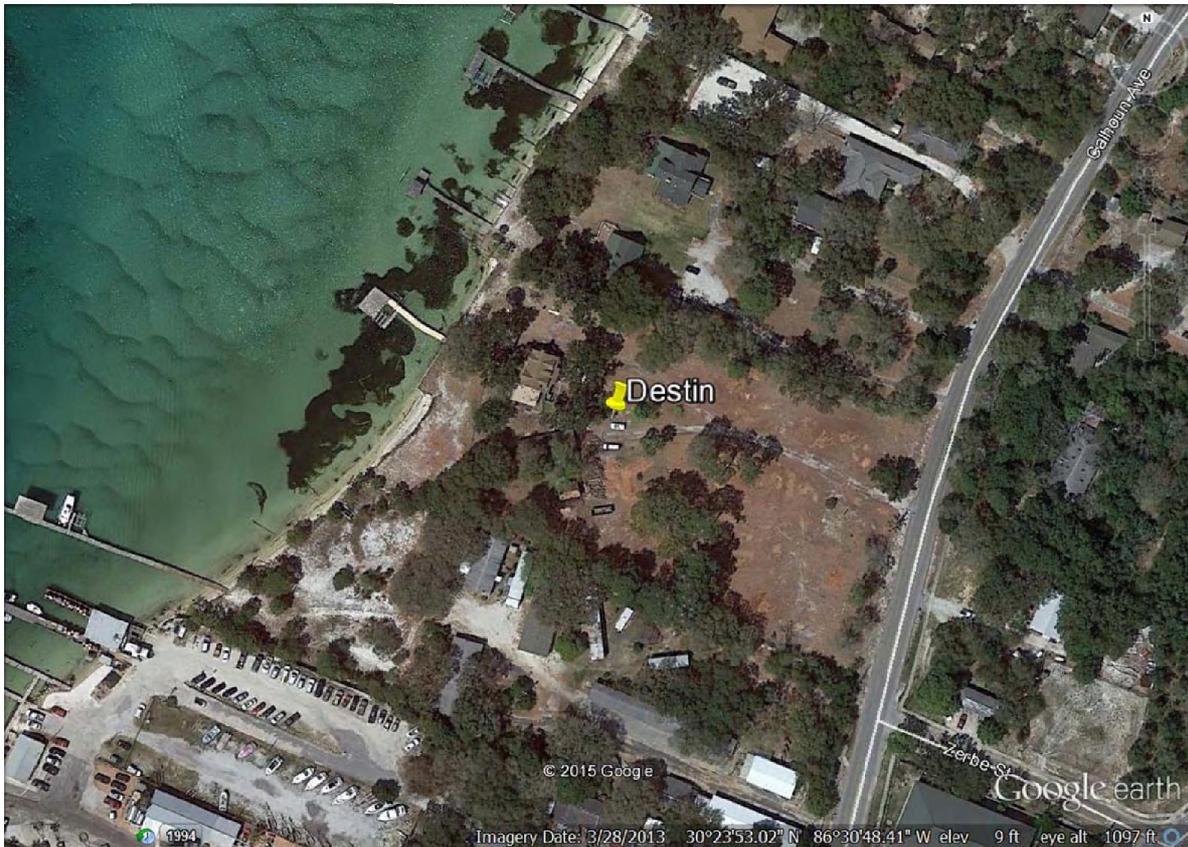


Figure 11: Aerial View of the Proposed Leonard Destin Park Site and Aquatic Habitat. Google Imagery, 2015.

The specific Leonard Destin Park site elements in the proposed conceptual site plan (see Figure 12) include:

1. **Modified Dock with Kayak Launch.** The existing pier would be modified on the existing pilings by expanding the width to make it ADA compliant. The existing dock has a platform deck at the end of it (see Figure 11). The total area of the dock would be 3,550 square feet. The decking would be comprised of durable composite grated material and the other structural features would be comprised of natural (i.e., wood) material and/or durable composite materials.
2. **Expanded Beach Area.** The current beach area on the site is approximately 0.3 acres and is sparsely vegetated with primarily non-native grasses (see Figure 9 and Figure 10). This beach area would be shaped and slightly expanded landward to less than 0.5 acres for total beach area. Shoreline stabilization efforts such as planting native grasses at the perimeter may be undertaken. During final design and construction, the specific native plants for shoreline stabilization will be identified. Impacts to native plants will be avoided wherever possible. Sand may also be imported to the site to supplement the beach area. All beach expansion efforts would take landward of the mean high water line and would be designed to minimize secondary

sedimentation impacts on adjacent SAV habitat and to avoid impacts to any native vegetation. An informational sign would also be placed at the beach area and could describe park rules, directions, a map, and provide site interpretation.

3. **ADA Beach Access with Mats.** An ADA beach ramp mat 50 feet long and 4 feet wide would provide ADA access to the beach.
4. **Raised Wooden Deck with Platform.** At the landward edge of the beach area, a wooden deck (approximately 2,700 square feet) would be constructed. Construction of this deck may require removal of several existing trees. To the extent possible, landscaping would prioritize conserving native trees.
5. **Boardwalk.** A 100-foot long, six-foot wide wooden boardwalk would be constructed adjacent to the raised wooden deck that would connect this deck to the shore (element number 8).
6. **Heron Rookery Protection Zone (Planted with Native Grasses).** The boardwalk around the heron rookery would guide park visitors to the peripheral edges of the rookery and native grasses would be planted underneath the trees in an area approximately 16,500 square feet.
7. **Kayak Launch from Deck.** The expanded boardwalk (element number 8) would include a kayak launch that would likely be partially submerged at high tide. After SAV surveys are completed, the construction and design of the deck incorporate measures to minimize impacts to SAV.
8. **Expanded Boardwalk and Deck.** A raised wooden deck would replace existing structures along the shoreline on the north side of the parcel and would be expanded to include 2,725 square feet of water access.
9. **Large Picnic Pavilion with Interpretation (using architectural vernacular of original Destin Homestead).** An open air picnic pavilion (900 square feet) with four picnic tables and interpretive signs would be constructed on the north side of the site using architectural vernacular of the original Destin Homestead (wood construction). The structures would consist of basic wood frames to provide shade with concrete slabs beneath.
10. **Boardwalk between Heron Rookery Trees with Interpretive Signage.** A wood boardwalk 144 feet long and six feet wide would be constructed through the heron rookery area, but would avoid the tree canopy areas. Construction would not occur during bird nesting season. Educational signage will be installed at the site. Recognizing the importance of the existing rookery and in consultation with the Florida Chapter of the National Audubon Society, the Trustees would preserve the current heron rookery by building a protection zone around the mature live oaks. Further, the Florida Trustees are exploring and may nominate the site for inclusion on the Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail.
11. **Restrooms with Outdoor Showers.** The site would provide an ADA accessible restroom (750 square feet) with outdoor showers connected to the municipal sewer and water.
12. **Splash Pad.** The splash pad would be approximately 60 feet by 80 feet in size. Underneath the rubberized splash pad surface a pool filtration (or similar) system would treat water from the public water supply. Used water would be re-captured, creating a closed loop system where additional water is input on an as-needed basis. Concrete would surround the edges of the splash pad. An informational sign describing would also be constructed at the splash pad (based on input from the local government).

13. **Expanded Fruit Tree Grove.** The proposed project would also protect and expand an existing small fruit tree grove in the center of the property by planting four fruit trees and protecting and fencing approximately five existing trees.
14. **Interpretation (Full-size Historical Seine Boat for Interaction).** The site would have a full size re-creation of a wood seine boat for historical interpretation. The boat would be set in the ground and cover an area approximately 30 feet by 10 feet.
15. **Covered Interpretation and Signage.** An informational kiosk structure (a wood structure of less than 100 square feet) would accompany and explain the historical and cultural value of the seine boat to the City of Destin.
16. **Welcome Sign and Public Art.** The project would include a welcome area with public art and concrete pavers at the drop off area and park entry plaza covering 2,025 square feet.
17. **Playground.** Play features would include a natural playground approximately 12 feet by 20 feet in size with safety surfacing and edging. An informational sign would also be placed at the playground (based on input from the local government).
18. **Parking for Approximately 30 cars.** The proposed site plan includes a gravel parking lot for approximately 30 vehicles at the rear (eastern) side of the site (approximately 18,000 square feet). The parking area would include two ADA accessible parking spaces, which would be on concrete slabs with stabilized subgrade.
19. **Emergency Vehicle Access.** Adjacent to the parking lot would be a concrete emergency access turn-around loop.
20. **Stormwater Treatment pond (as-needed).** A stormwater pond and landscape drainage will be implemented pending engineering designs and calculations of stormwater runoff.
21. **Pedestrian Access from Calhoun Avenue.** The proposed project includes constructing a walkway from the site parking lot to the public sidewalk at the east edge of the property.

Additional site elements not explicitly labeled in the conceptual master plan include:

- **Concrete sidewalks.** The proposed project would construct ADA accessible concrete sidewalks between picnic area and viewing area elements in the central property areas (five feet wide and four inches deep encompassing an area approximately 6,500 square feet).
- **General site furnishings.** Additional site elements would include seven trash receptacles, ten benches, split rail cedar fencing (four feet high and 255 feet long), and historical-style homestead fencing (205 feet long and three feet high).
- **Signs.** In addition to educational signage discussed above for playground, seine boat, and heron rookery, signage would include signage at the main vehicular drive and main pedestrian entrance.
- **Lighting.** Site lighting would include nine pole lights at parking areas and one accent light at the low voltage signage wall. All lighting would be low-glare, wildlife friendly, and comply with the guidance provided in the current edition of the FWC's Wildlife Lighting Criteria.
- **Landscaping.** General landscape development would also include hardwood tree maintenance, native plantings, an irrigation system near the park entry and park core only to maintain lawn areas, and landscape drainage.

- **Additional site work.** Site work would entail removal of any currently existing site structures and the two currently existing concrete slabs (boardwalk area) located on the southwestern portion of the site. Additional site work includes modifying existing electric service, connecting to the municipal sewer system, fire hydrant assembly and accompanying water main work, site grading (as-needed), and erosion control efforts during construction.

Final engineering and design plans for the proposed site improvements would be completed following further environmental resource surveys and consultations with state and federal agencies; proposed site improvements may be modified to avoid and minimize potential impacts to natural resources.

Installation of the proposed site improvements is estimated to take nine to 12 months. Staging of equipment and materials would likely be located on the property where parking lots would be constructed (according to the conceptual plan), or on previously disturbed areas of the site.

Construction equipment will include a combination of hand-held or power tools for carpentry work as well as heavier construction equipment such as bulldozers, barges, trucks, backhoes, tractor trailers, cranes, small excavators, fork lifts, asphalt machine, roller, or generators. As discussed in greater detail below, standard practice BMPs will be employed during construction to minimize and avoid potential adverse impacts to EFH during in-water work such as mooring and staging work barges in areas devoid of SAV overnight and on weekends/holidays. Construction would require the transport of materials to the project site. The number of trips required to transfer materials would be based on the amount and type of materials needed for site improvements. These details will be determined as part of the final construction design and plan.

Leonard Destin Park

Conceptual Master Plan

November 2015



Figure 12: Proposed Leonard Destin Park Conceptual Plan. Left side of the conceptual plan shows the existing dock.

4.2.1 Assessment of effects to EFH

The proposed Leonard Destin Park is within the EFH area for coastal migratory pelagics, red drum, reef fish, shrimp, and stone crab. SAV, comprised of shoalgrass (*Halodule wrightii*) is present at the Leonard Destin Park project area and based on aerial imagery, there appears to be SAV in the vicinity of the existing dock (FDEP, 2015; see Figure 13 and Figure 14). Updated SAV surveys would occur prior to construction, ideally during June 1 through September 30 because SAV bed continuity, extent, and density are subject to change over time. Mud substrate and estuarine water column habitat also exists within the project area. No HAPC or EFH areas protected from fishing were identified within the project area.

Under the proposed action, the existing dock would be widened to make it ADA compliant and would result in an in-water area being permanently shaded resulting in SAV impacts. No new pilings would be required; all dock work would use the existing pilings. Therefore, no in-water dredging or digging would occur. The dock area is expected to be approximately 3,550 square feet.

Dock construction work and the shadow footprint of the widened dock have the potential to impact SAV, due to suspended sediments and because shading has been known to reduce SAV patch extent. Updated SAV surveys would occur prior to construction because SAV bed continuity, extent, and density are subject to change over time. An analysis of SAV, likely via aerial imagery analysis and field surveys (to be conducted during June 1 through September 30), would be conducted prior to finalization of engineering and design plans. The USACE and NMFS dock construction guidelines would be followed where possible regarding dock improvements. If the SAV survey reveals SAV near the proposed dock location would be adversely affected by the widening of the dock, there is the potential to modify this structure to minimize anticipated SAV impacts. The current dock height has not been quantified, but appears to rest about one foot above the water. The main branch of the dock would be oriented approximately northwest from the northwest shoreline of the site. Additionally, the design of the modified dock would incorporate the use of durable composite grated material for the decking that would allow additional sunlight through the decking to reach SAV under the structure while also being ADA compliant.

On land construction activities such as the construction of a parking lot, picnic pavilions, restrooms, a playground, splash pad, and paved sidewalks as well as improvement such as expanding the fruit tree grove, seine boat, and beach enhancements have the potential to temporarily impact EFH in the immediate waters adjacent to the site from erosion and runoff, increasing turbidity and suspended sediments.

The Trustees have begun coordination and consultation with NMFS Habitat Conservation Division to complete regulatory compliance with EFH consultation requirements. Any EFH conservation recommendations received during consultation would be incorporated into final project design and implemented to avoid and minimize EFH impacts. The Trustees would work with the NMFS to ensure appropriate conservation recommendations are used, which could include:

- Use of BMPs during construction to minimize and avoid potential adverse impacts to EFH during in-water work under this project. Construction BMPs could include, but are not limited to

mooring and staging work barges overnight and on weekends/holidays in areas devoid of SAV and in areas where previous impacts have occurred.

- All construction activities would be completed during daylight hours.
- When possible, pilings would be installed using methods and materials that use the least disruptive techniques, given substrate conditions, such as pushing or jetting.
- Dock construction methods would be designed to maximize sunlight reaching SAV.
- Compensatory mitigation, contingency, and monitoring plans would be developed and provided to the USACE and NMFS for unavoidable impacts to EFH.

The proposed project component has the potential to cause disturbances to EFH in areas adjacent to the project location from increased suspended sediment and runoff and due to the widened dock.

However, as noted above, EFH conservation recommendations received during consultation would be incorporated into final project design and implementation to avoid and minimize EFH impacts.

Therefore, adverse impacts to EFH are expected to be short term and minor.

4.2.2 Impact Avoidance and Minimization Measures

- An analysis of SAV, likely via aerial imagery analysis and field surveys during the period June 1 through September 30, would be conducted prior to the start of construction. Results of the SAV survey will be provided to the NMFS Habitat Conservation Division for review.
- Compliance with the USACE dock construction guidelines (USACE and NMFS 2001; see attached) will be followed to minimize SAV impacts. ADA compliance will also be considered during final dock design.
- To avoid permanent impacts to the SAV, a variety of impact avoidance measures, in compliance with the USACE dock construction guidelines, would be taken. In particular, durable composite grated decking material would be installed to maximize sunlight through the structure to SAV under the dock.
- Improvement activities would include following established BMPs for construction activities such as the implementation of an erosion control and stormwater management plan, the installation of sediment traps prior to commencement of construction activities, and ongoing construction monitoring to ensure compliance.



Figure 13: SAV off of the Proposed Leonard Destin Park Parcel (FLDEP 2015).



Figure 14: SAV off of the Leonard Destin Park parcel in 2015 (top) and unknown year, likely earlier than 2014 (bottom). Source: Google Maps 2015 and ArcGIS 2015.

4.2.3 Conclusion

The proposed work includes modification of the existing dock to make it ADA compliant. The design of the expanded docks would incorporate the use of durable composite grated material for the decking, which would allow increased sunlight through the structure intended to minimize SAV impacts. The use of this grated material would minimize shading impacts to SAV under the dock. The proposed construction may cause disturbances to EFH from increased suspended sediment and runoff. However, these disturbances are expected to be short-term and minor and the risks and potential impacts will be minimized by following identified best management practices during implementation.

Overall, this project may cause minor localized negative impacts to estuarine areas that are considered EFH for various life stages of the species managed under FMPs.

4.3 Florida Coastal Access Project: Island View Park Component

The proposed Florida Coastal Access Project: Island View Park component is a 7.13-acre tract of land that is currently owned by and located within Franklin County, Florida about one mile east of the City of Carrabelle¹. The property is divided by U.S. 98, a state-designated Big Bend Scenic Byway, with an inland northwestern parcel (“inland parcel”) that is 4 acres and a southeastern waterfront parcel (“waterfront parcel”) that is 3.13 acres (see Figure 15 and Figure 18 for proposed parcel location). The waterfront parcel of the property includes 884 linear feet of frontage along St. George Sound, which lies between two State-designated aquatic preserves (listed as “Outstanding Florida Waters”) and is adjacent to the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve. There are two existing piers on the property (see Figure 17). The waterfront parcel was previously developed with number of small cottages as part of a motel. All cottage structures and surface improvements were razed and most debris removed after 2011, other than two fishing docks and a dilapidated concrete boat ramp. There is also a footpath along the waterfront that is bare of vegetation. There are no currently existing barriers to entering the waterfront property, which is used for unofficial parking associated with fishing activities on the existing docks (see Figure 16 and Figure 17). The waterfront parcel has some nearshore grass and some remnant maritime hammock habitat, but much of the waterfront parcel is currently un-vegetated due to prior and ongoing disturbances (see Figure 16 and Figure 17). At the shoreline, emergent marsh grasses occur but have been disturbed by regular mowing. There is SAV present near the piers at this site.

¹ Franklin County acquired the Island View Park property as a result of a National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant, the primary purpose of which was to protect and preserve coastal habitat through the purchase of land and ecological restoration. The grant also included limited, passive recreational benefits, as described in the Phase V ERP/EA Section 2.2.2.4.



Figure 15: Proposed Island View Park Plot; four acres on the inland parcel and 3.13 acres on the waterfront parcel in Franklin County, Florida on St. George Sound.



Figure 16: Island View Park- Waterfront parcel looking northeast along shoreline (source: TPL 2015).



Figure 17: Island View Park- Waterfront parcel looking towards shoreline from existing dock (source: TPL 2015).



Figure 18: Aerial View of the Proposed Island View Park Site. Google Imagery, 2015.

The specific site elements detailed in the proposed conceptual site plan for the Island View Park parcel (Figure 19) include:

1. **Proposed Turn Lane.** Due to the high speed of cars and sharp turn in the road, a right hand turning lane from U.S. 98 into the proposed park is needed for public safety reasons. The proposed turn lane would be approximately 200 feet long by 25 feet wide (5,000 square feet) with part of it being constructed the road edge of the waterfront property and the remaining area being constructed in the public right of way.
2. **Expanded Dock for Safety and Accessibility with Fishing Platforms.** Dock expansion includes widening the decking to be ADA compliant. All pier work is proposed to be constructed using the existing pilings. The existing planks on the piers would be removed and replaced to create a pier approximately six feet wide with railings. The total square footage of Dock 1 and Dock 2 would be approximately 2,140 square feet and 1,400 square feet, respectively. The design of the expanded dock would incorporate the use of durable composite grated material for the decking.
3. **Boardwalk.** The proposed boardwalk along the waterfront would be a raised boardwalk made of wood or composite material. This is proposed for 510 linear feet, six feet in width, covering

approximately 3,060 square feet. Final boardwalk height would be determined based on environment and safety concerns.

4. **Stormwater Treatment (as-needed).** A stormwater pond would be located southwest of the proposed parking lot, pending engineering designs and calculations of stormwater runoff. The stormwater pond could excavate up to 700 yds³ of substrate, but the final design depends on the calculations. However, this site has proposed pervious pavement, likely mitigating the necessity for a stormwater pond.
5. **Deck Overlook with Seating and Interpretive Sign.** The proposed project includes construction of a wood overlook deck that would be approximately 35 feet by 50 feet that would contain interior bench seating. This structure would be constructed along the boardwalk, at the base of the northernmost pier.
6. **Lawn Area.** The lawn area (grass) is proposed on both sides of the central plaza, one plot approximately 70 by 30 feet and the second approximately 100 by 35 feet and would require irrigation. An irrigation system would be installed to maintain the open lawn area. The waterfront side is not connected to public water, the system would need to connect to public water via eight inch water main and establish a simple hose and pipe drip irrigation system. Minimal additional landscaping would be done for this area, which is already open on the current parcel.
7. **Entry Signage.** Entry signage would be located at the entrance to the park, right before the parking lot.
8. **Central Plaza with Covered Information Kiosk.** This kiosk is proposed to be a four by eight foot structure, on the central plaza area consisting of 1,500 square feet. The central plaza will be finished with concrete pavers with two inch sand setting bed and six inch gravel aggregate base, rendering it a pervious cover. Each concrete paver is approximately 12 by 12 inches in size.
9. **Parking for approximately 32 vehicles.** An ADA accessible parking lot would be constructed of pervious pavement using concrete paver parking stalls. Each concrete paver is approximately 12 by 12 inches in a six inch aggregate base with sand setting bed, to create a pervious parking surface. The parking lot would be constructed for 32 visitors covering 7,000 square feet with 35 wheel stops and 1,120 square feet of concrete ribbon curbing at the perimeter. Total impervious surface covered at the site would be approximately 21,000 square feet.
10. **Beach Access for Kayaks (Paddle Craft).** The boardwalk would include access directly to the beach on the eastern portion of the property. The existing dilapidated concrete boat ramp would be removed to provide this beach access, but some vegetation removal may be required. During final design and construction, the vegetation removal efforts will be designed to minimize impacts to native vegetation along the shoreline and minimize any secondary sedimentation impacts on adjacent SAV habitat. The beach area would encompass an approximate area of 1,350 square feet.
11. **Alternative Vehicular Entry/Exit.** This alternative entry/exit would be constructed of asphalt (two inches, with a six inch limerock base and 12 inch Type B subgrade. The total area of the alternative entry/exit will be approximately 10,700 square feet.

12. **Proposed Acceleration Lane.** The proposed acceleration lane would be approximately 125 feet long by 25 feet wide (3,200 square feet) with part of it being constructed on the waterfront property and part in the public right of way.

Additional site elements not explicitly labeled in the conceptual master plan that would be paid for by the proposed Phase V project include:

- **Concrete sidewalks.** The proposed project would construct ADA accessible concrete sidewalks (five feet wide and four inches deep, covering approximately 635 square feet) along the parking area.
- **General site furnishing.** Site amenities would include four wood arbors with bench swings, six trash receptacles, and four benches (to be placed at the open lawn south of the parking area).
- **Signs.** The site would include two signs at the park entrance, six panels for the covered information kiosk, and eight interpretive signs throughout the site.
- **Lighting.** The site would also include one low voltage accent light at the entry sign, two accent lights at the central plaza area, and eight pole lights in the parking area. All lighting would be low-glare, wildlife friendly, and comply with the guidance provided in the current edition of the FWC's Wildlife Lighting Criteria.
- **Additional site work.** Additional work would include removal of an existing concrete slabs, fire hydrant assembly and accompanying water main work, modifying existing electric service.

Final engineering and design plans for the proposed site improvements would be completed following further environmental resource surveys and consultations with state and federal agencies; proposed site improvements may be modified to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts to natural resources.

Installation of the proposed site improvements is estimated to take 7-9 months. Staging of equipment and materials for the project sites would likely be located on the property where parking lots would be constructed (according to the conceptual plan), or on previously disturbed areas of the sites.

Construction equipment will include a combination of hand-held or power tools for carpentry work as well as heavier construction equipment such as bulldozers, barges, trucks, backhoes, tractor trailers, cranes, small excavators, fork lifts, asphalt machine, roller, or generators. As discussed in greater detail below, standard practice BMPs will be employed during construction to minimize and avoid potential adverse impacts to EFH during in-water work such as mooring and staging work barges in areas devoid of SAV overnight and on weekends/holidays. Construction would require the transport of materials to project sites. The number of trips required to transfer materials would be based on the amount and type of materials needed for site improvements at each project site. These details will be determined as part of the final construction design and plan.

Island View Park

Conceptual Master Plan

November 2015



Figure 19: Proposed Island View Park Conceptual Plan. Bottom right of the conceptual plan shows the existing docks.

4.3.1 Assessment of effects to EFH

The proposed Island View Park is within the EFH area for coastal migratory pelagics, red drum, reef fish, shrimp, and stone crab. SAV is present at the Island View Park project area, located on St. George Sound, east of the Carrabelle River (NPS 2010). According to the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve Management Plan (FDEP 2014), SAV found in the Apalachicola Bay includes fresh water, brackish, and marine species. Island View Park is close to this reserve and is expected to have similar SAV communities. SAV distribution is confined to the shallow perimeters of the system because of high turbidity which limits the depth of the photic zone. The shallow bayside regions of St. George and the mainland areas of St. George Sound support SAV (shoalgrass is the dominant species). Turtle-grass and manatee-grass are found in deeper, higher salinity waters in the eastern reaches of the Bay. Widgeon-grass and tapegrass are found near the mouth of the river and in the upper reaches of the Bay. There is SAV in the water near the docks at this site. However, it is unlikely that seagrasses persist under the existing piers. The most recent SAV survey was conducted during 2010, before that the most recent was from 1992 showing patchy, discontinuous, sparse SAV. SAV has increased in St. George Sound since 1992, but they are comprised of patchy and continuous seagrasses along the shore of the site within St. George Sound. Seagrasses are apparent in the aerial photo from 2014 (Google Maps Imagery 2014; Figure 21). The Florida Department of Environmental Protection's seagrass GIS data, shows a patch of discontinuous SAV off of this site, but it is difficult to differentiate between soft and sandy bottom substrate and SAV at this site. The patch size is in a discontinuous area and could cover portions of 2.5 acres off the proposed Island View Park site (FDEP 2015; see Figure 20). Updated SAV surveys would be conducted during June 1 through September 30 prior to construction because SAV bed continuity, extent, and density are subject to change over time.

Mud substrate and estuarine water column habitat also exists within the project area. No Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC) or EFH areas protected from fishing were identified within the project area.

Under the Proposed Action, all dock/pier work would use the existing pilings. Therefore, no in-water dredging or digging would occur, thus resulting in minimal SAV disturbances. However, the dock would be widened to be ADA compliant, pending additional SAV surveys and consultations. The total dock area is expected to be approximately 3,500 square feet including the fishing platforms (approximately 2,100 square feet for Dock 1 and 1,400 square feet for Dock 2).

Impacts to SAV would result from the shadow of the widened piers, as shading has been known to impact SAV. Impacts to SAV would also stem from external dock work and could include increased turbidity and suspended sediments in waters around the dock in the short-term. An analysis of SAV, likely via aerial imagery analysis and field surveys conducted June 1 through September 30, would be conducted prior to finalization of engineering and design plans. The USACE and NMFS dock construction guidelines would be followed where possible regarding dock improvements. If results of the SAV survey identify SAV in the potential shadow of the dock, design modifications would be made to avoid and minimize impacts where possible. The current dock heights have not been quantified, but are not likely greater than 2 feet. Additionally, if necessary, the design of the expanded docks would incorporate the

use of durable composite grated material for the decking, which would allow increased sunlight through the structure to SAV under the dock while also being ADA compliant.

On land construction activities including the construction of a pervious parking lot, boardwalk and observation platforms, and access turning and acceleration lanes as well as site improvements at the lawn areas, and beach enhancements have the potential to temporarily impact EFH in the immediate vicinity or greater St. George Sound from erosion and runoff, increasing turbidity and suspended sediments.

The Trustees have begun coordination and consultation with the NMFS Habitat Conservation Division to complete regulatory compliance with EFH consultation requirements. Any EFH conservation recommendations during consultation would be incorporated into final project design and implementation to avoid and minimize EFH impacts. The Trustees would work with the NMFS to ensure appropriate conservation recommendations are used, which could include:

- Use of BMPs during construction to minimize and avoid potential adverse impacts to EFH during in-water work under this project. Construction BMPs could include, but are not limited to mooring and staging work barges overnight and on weekends/holidays in areas devoid of SAV and in areas where previous impacts have occurred.
- All construction activities would be completed during daylight hours.
- When possible, pilings would be installed using methods and materials that use the least disruptive techniques, given substrate conditions, such as pushing or jetting.
- Dock construction methods would be designed to maximize sunlight reaching SAV.
- Compensatory mitigation, contingency, and monitoring plans would be developed and provided to the USACE and NMFS for unavoidable impacts to EFH.

The proposed project component has the potential to cause disturbances to EFH in areas adjacent to the project location from increased suspended sediment and runoff as well as the widening of the dock. However, as noted above, EFH conservation recommendations received during consultation would be incorporated into final project design and implementation to avoid and minimize EFH impacts. Therefore, adverse impacts to EFH are expected to be short term and minor.

4.3.2 Impact Avoidance and Minimization Measures

- An analysis of SAV, likely via aerial imagery analysis and field surveys conducted during June 1 through September 30, would be conducted prior to the start of construction. Results of the SAV survey will be provided to the NMFS Habitat Conservation Division for review.
- Compliance with the USACE dock construction guidelines (USACE and NMFS 2001; see attached) will be followed regarding dock construction to minimize SAV impacts. ADA compliance will also be considered during final dock design.
- To minimize permanent impacts to the SAV, a variety of impact avoidance measures, in compliance with the USACE dock construction guidelines, would be taken. In particular, durable

composite grated decking material would be utilized to allow light through to SAV in the immediate area.

- Improvement activities would include following established BMPs for construction activities such as the implementation of an erosion control and stormwater management plan, the installation of sediment traps prior to commencement of construction activities, and ongoing construction monitoring to ensure compliance.



Figure 20: SAV off of the Proposed Island View Park Parcel (FLDEP 2015).



Figure 21: SAV off of the Island View parcel prior to 2013 (top) and post 2013 (bottom). Source: ArcGIS 2015.

4.3.3 Conclusion

The proposed work includes modifying the existing docks to include fishing platforms and widening the decking to be ADA compliant. The design of the expanded docks would incorporate the use of durable composite grated material for the decking, which would maximize sunlight under the dock to minimize SAV impacts. The proposed construction might cause disturbances to EFH from increased suspended sediment and runoff. However, these disturbances are expected to be short-term and minor and the risks and potential impacts will be minimized by following identified best management practices during implementation.

Overall, this project may cause minor localized negative impacts to estuarine areas that are considered EFH for various life stages of the species managed under FMPs.

5.0 References

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